

[Mr. GILLMOR addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. GOSS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

□ 1530

SUPPORT H.R. 5, UNFUNDED MANDATE REFORM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. MARTINI] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARTINI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to revisit a topic that has been receiving a great deal of attention recently and to once again voice my strong support for the reforms endorsed by my colleagues in the Government Reform and Oversight Committee.

I refer in general to the issue of burdensome unfunded Federal mandates placed on States and localities, and specifically to H.R. 5, the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act of 1995, the bill our committee just passed and the one the House as a whole will consider this week. With the flow of Federal mandates that has flooded our local governments over the last 40 years, H.R. 5 will mark the high water point from which we will begin to bail our people out.

It appears as if the Members of Congress are finally coming to the realization that they do not legislate in a vacuum. They are beginning to see that many of their "feel good" laws and regulations actually impact local governments in very real and all too often unfortunately very negative ways.

Congress did not choose to pay for these regulations. Rather, it has for years forced somebody else to pick up the tab, namely States and localities.

This practice represents the height of fiscal irresponsibility and the old style of doing business that the Nation rejected in this last election. I firmly believe that it is exactly this kind of reform my constituents sent me here to address. They want Congress to be accountable to the people, and that is what I am determined to do.

The expensive nature of these mandates is well documented. In some instances, the prohibitive costs of Federal mandates exceed entire local Government budgets. And before complying with these regulations, municipali-

ties must first provide the essential basic services like sanitation, law enforcement, and education, that properly fall under their jurisdiction. It is little wonder that the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the National Governors' Association are adamant in their support for this legislation.

My constituents are angry, Mr. Speaker, and it is not simply because the Federal Government taxes them too much. To be sure, cutting taxes is another important issue that this Chamber will address soon. My constituents are angry because their local property taxes are also too high, and continue rising as I speak. This upward swing in local taxes can be attributed in large part to unfunded mandates, and it is simply not fair. It is not fair to our constituents, who must shoulder the extra burden for programs of questionable value, and it is not fair to local officials, who act responsibly and are forced to hike their constituents' taxes despite their best efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I reiterate my support for H.R. 5, the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995. The voters spoke loudly and clearly on November 8. They demanded a smaller, smarter, and less costly Government. With the passage of this very important bill, this body will demonstrate to the American people that here in Congress we are beginning to solve our Nation's problems, not with the heavy hand of regulation, but with the responsible hand of partnership extended to our colleagues on the State and local level.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. EHLERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

HONORING UMPIRE RON LUCIANO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. HINCHEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to former major league umpire Ronald M. Luciano who passed away Wednesday at his home in Endicott, NY, at the age of 57.

One of the American League's top umpires throughout his 11-year career, Luciano was a respected and well-liked member of the baseball community. Luciano worked the 1974 World Series and the 1971, 1975, and 1978 American League Championships, an honor reserved for the league's best umpires.

Luciano retired from umpiring in 1980 to become a television commentator, as well as an author. His 1982 book, "The Umpire Strikes Back" was a best seller.

It is as one of the game's great ambassadors, however, that Luciano will be most remembered. Luciano brought

a showmanship to the sport seldom seen from an umpire. Through his unique style, often comedic, Luciano helped sell our Nation's pastime to fans of all ages.

Even after he achieved national stature, Luciano remained an active member of the Broome County community. A devoted son and brother, Luciano returned to Endicott where he undertook a local business venture. Luciano was frequently spotted lending his support and expertise at Little League baseball games.

The citizens of Broome County will miss him as much for his community involvement as for what he did for baseball.

I hope my colleagues will join me today in paying tribute to Ron Luciano. His passing is a loss for both baseball and for a community to which he was such an integral member. I extend my sincerest condolences to his family.

DON'T RUSH THROUGH UNFUNDED MANDATE ACT

(Mr. MASCARA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, as a former county commissioner of Washington County, PA, I know firsthand how the citizens of southwestern Pennsylvania have been victimized by unfunded mandates. Regularly, my fellow commissioners and I struggled to find ways to pay for regulations handed down by both the Federal and State governments. Some of these regulations were worthwhile. Others were not.

Despite their relative merits, all invariably resulted in the de facto taxation of my constituents. While I support legislation to rectify this situation, I am worried that H.R. 5, as supported by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, will not adequately solve the problem.

During markup of H.R. 5 by the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, on which I serve, it became clear that this bill could actually weaken current health and safety laws. None of us should support that outcome.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are making a big mistake by pushing through major legislation like the unfunded mandates bill in the first 100 days of this session by rushing this legislation without thinking it through.

Let's talk about it. Let's amend this bill and hopefully the House will support some of those amendments.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.